

SRIVIJAYA PERIOD B.E. 12 - 16TH CENTURY

MAP



HISTORY

The Srivijaya Era has as its seat of Rule the Western side of Sumatra island, and reached past Java. right up as far as the Malay Peninsula, and even further, rising up to what is now the city of Nakorn Sri Tammarat in South Thailand. The Thai region here was then known as Korahi (now known as ‘Chaya’ or ‘Jaya’).

It is proposed that Dapunta Hyang originated from the eastern coast of the Malay Peninsula, with the Chaiya District in Surat Thani Province identified as the focal point of Srivijaya during the Srivijayan Period, when Srivijaya held sway over what is now southern Thailand. Within the Chaiya region, distinct traces of Srivijayan influence are evident in

artworks influenced by Mahayana Buddhism. Due to the abundance of artifacts, including the Ligor stele, discovered in this area, some scholars have sought to argue that Chaiya served as the capital rather than Palembang. This era was also characterized by artistic endeavors, with the Buddhist art of the Srivijayan Kingdom believed to have drawn inspiration from Indian styles, particularly the Dvaravati school of art. Some scholars posit that Chaiya likely played a pivotal role in Srivijaya, serving as a regional capital within the empire.

ART

The influence of the Srivijaya Kingdom permeated the artistry of the people within this



culture, leaving an indelible mark on the entire southern region of Thailand. Many of the skilled artisans behind this cultural exchange hailed from India, a fact discernible in the subtle plumpness and the more pronounced flesh on the Buddha's body—a characteristic reminiscent of the artistic norms prevalent in Indian culture. Each country and culture,

in depicting their deities, inevitably conform to the aesthetic values ingrained in their cultural conditioning.

During the Srivijaya Era, Indian artisans exerted a significant impact, portraying the Buddha in a distinctly Indian style. Evident markers of this influence include the sharper, more pointed nose—a reflection of the Indian physique. This stands in contrast to the norm in purely Southeast Asian sculpture, which typically features a short-bridged nose, as seen in Lopburi, Sukhothai, and later eras. Another noticeable feature is the rounded and slightly pudgy characteristics, echoing Indian ideals of physical beauty and serving as an artistic representation of the 32 physical signs associated with Buddha, as observed during Siddhartha's birth.

DATA SOURCES

- <https://thai-heritage.org/srivijaya/>
- <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Srivijaya>
- <https://www.thailandamulets.com/history.php?id=34>
- <https://th.wikipedia.org/wiki/จตุคามรามเทพ>
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